

REMARKS BY MARIANNE LAMONT HORINKO  
RCRA CORRECTIVE ACTION CONFERENCE  
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- This is a bittersweet day for me
  - On the one hand, I've always loved coming to these RCRA Corrective Action conferences
    - This group has a special knack for intense, thought-provoking sessions during the day, followed by good food and camaraderie at night
    - Last year's meeting in New Orleans was an especially good time
    - So I'm delighted to join you for one last go-round in Orlando
  - On the other hand, this is in fact my last hurrah
    - As you know, I'm leaving EPA June 1 to spend more time with my husband and two wonderful, young kids
    - For the last three years, I've missed a lot of time with them, and they've missed me
    - It's time for me to go home
  - But I'll carry with me many fond memories of my days at EPA, and these RCRA conferences will be one of them
- Given that this is my last Corrective Action conference, you'll forgive me if I spend a few minutes looking back at the past
  - As I head to the door, I'll pass by the offices of all the good people who have given long hours to help build our programs
  - So over the next few weeks, as I say good-bye to a lot of people, at the

- same time I'll be saying "Thank you"
- "Thank you" for being so supportive during my time at EPA, and  
"Thank you" for a job well done
  - I particularly want to thank all the EPA people who work to control and minimize waste streams, and I want to include in this a lot of people who aren't here today
    - Your hard work and dedication over the years have helped me and supported my initiatives in so many ways
    - For example, EPA's employees have shown outstanding energy and leadership putting flesh on the bones of my priorities
      - Like the Resource Conservation Challenge, Revitalization, and One Clean-up
    - And I will always hold a special place in my heart for all of your work on RCRA Corrective Action
      - A week ago today I had the honor of giving an award to Dow Chemical for the 1000<sup>th</sup> facility to achieve our two environmental indicators for Corrective Action
      - That's an astounding achievement: 1000 facilities out of 1700 have hit both targets, and we still have a year and a half to go
    - So congratulations and thank you to the federal and state Corrective Action team members, who are working so hard to make Corrective Action determinations
  - While I'm on the subject of the environmental indicators, let me say "thank you" as well to our business partners
    - The relationship between EPA and the business community has been

- marked historically by a kind of dynamic tension
- That’s not necessarily bad...just the nature of the regulatory arena
  - I came back to EPA with the explicit goal of building strong, constructive relationships with businesses, and engaging them as partners in a broad range of environmental endeavors
  - Those partnerships have reduced health and environmental risks in communities all across this country
  - When our new Administrator, Mike Leavitt, arrived at the Agency a few months ago, he said that “collaboration” was one of his key principles for making environmental progress
    - To me “collaboration” is another way of saying “partnership”
  - Today I want to thank all those companies who have worked with me to strengthen America’s environmental partnerships
- I noticed from the participant list that over 30 state governments are represented here today
    - That’s not surprising, because the states play an absolutely essential role in helping the American people reach their environmental goals
      - The states certainly share EPA’s commitment to achieving measurable environmental results at RCRA facilities
      - Indeed, most of the states, including seven here in Region 4, now are authorized for and running corrective action programs
    - Thank you, too, for your long-standing contributions to environmental protection, especially during my term at EPA
  - Finally, I want to express my gratitude to America’s community leaders
    - Virtually everything we do at corrective action sites around the

- country affects the health of America's communities
- So community input, community participation in cleanup projects is invaluable
  - Because community leaders invest so much time and energy in local environmental issues, the vision that we are all working to achieve in America's neighborhoods is in large part the vision of the people living there
  - You have been committed partners in our environmental efforts, and I thank you for it
- I realize that I am leaving at a critical juncture in the Corrective Action program
    - We've made a substantial progress over the past several years – like the achievement of our two environmental indicators at the majority of high-priority facilities
    - But there's a lot of work still to do
      - Remedies have to be selected and cleanups completed at the rest of the high-priority facilities
      - We need to tackle the medium- and low-priority facilities as well
    - In short, we need to rethink the way we do business, and chart a course to clean up all RCRA facilities subject to corrective action
  - You notice that I keep saying "we"
    - It's hard to break old habits
    - I mean "you"
      - In a few short weeks I'll be sitting back home and out of the

picture

- But YOU have a very robust road map to follow into the future
  - A year ago, EPA published its vision for the future of this country's waste program in "Beyond RCRA: Waste and Materials Management in the Year 2020"
  - Our good friends in the states helped us develop this vision statement, which I like to call the 2020 Vision
  - It foresees a future where much less – and much less toxic – waste is generated, and much of the waste that is generated is recycled
  - It foresees that we've solved many of our current problems in waste management, and that we've cleaned up most of the legacy RCRA facilities subject to corrective action
  - This vision paper also says that "by the year 2020, cleanup of existing contamination problems at RCRA-regulated facilities will hopefully, largely be completed, though some long-term remediation work may still be ongoing."
- This is the future I want to live in
  - And even though I will no longer be working at the Agency, the program is in good hands
    - EPA's new Administrator is committed to reaching these same goals
  - In fact, he wants to reach them faster
    - As you've probably heard, accelerating the pace of cleanup is one of his main themes
  - That's in fact what 2020 Vision is all about: reaching our

environmental goals as fast as we can

- So as I get set to walk out the door, let me tell you what I hope to see with my 2020 vision of the future
  - By 2020, I expect all RCRA facilities to have their remedies in place
    - It is likely that in the universe of sites that have not yet been addressed, some – after further assessment – may not require cleanup
    - Other sites will have complicated cleanups that entail a lot of work
  - But the bottom line for my vision of the future is this: by 2020, all RCRA sites must have remedies in place, if needed, and be on their way to being cleaned up
  - In my vision of the future, EPA and state regulators have come up with a new way of doing business that is focused on achieving environmental results at all facilities by 2020
  - In my vision of the future, American businesses have accepted full responsibility, and full accountability, for all their RCRA facilities
    - By 2020 big companies with multiple facilities have cleaned up all their facilities
      - I expect those companies to lead by example, as most are doing for the environmental indicators
    - By 2020 companies with fewer facilities have enrolled in state cleanup programs or found other efficient ways to get their sites cleaned up quickly
  - By 2020 the consultants who work at cleanups all offer performance-

- based bids to industry, bids that demonstrate clean, environmentally responsible plans to achieve 2020 goals for all their clients
- In my vision of the future, local governments have facilitated even more widespread public participation in local cleanups, so neighborhoods are part of the planning and the vision
  - I know my 2020 vision of the future is shared by most if not all the people in this room
    - Because we've worked side by side for several years, I know you are committed to making this vision a reality
    - Everyone who is involved in RCRA corrective action has an obligation to make sure that all facilities are assessed and cleaned up so our families and neighbors safe have places to live and work
    - This is more – much more – than a statutory obligation
      - It is a moral obligation
    - Our generation has a responsibility to the future to finish cleaning up the mistakes of the past
    - The time has come to set a path the brings RCRA cleanup programs essentially to an end
      - We need an exit strategy
      - We must have an exit strategy
    - Those of us in government need to have a credible plan to finish the work of RCRA corrective action, a plan that gives assurance to Congress, and a plan that gives hope and a timetable to communities waiting for sites to be cleaned up
    - Those in the private sector need to report publicly on their

environmental liabilities, take responsibility for their environmental liabilities, and complete their cleanups as quickly as possible

- Cleaning up more than 3800 sites with a RCRA corrective action obligation is no small matter
  - But I believe the RCRA cleanup program can be reshaped to achieve that goal
  - No single solution, no single new idea, will get us to 2020, so we've got to move simultaneously down several different paths
  - The 2020 Challenge is forcing us to rethink how we implement the corrective action program
    - That's not only healthy, but necessary
  - We have to look far beyond the traditional corrective action process and consider novel approaches in a way we never have before
  - We need to pursue innovative ideas like:
    - Self-implemented, self-certified cleanups with audits, a "trust but verify" model
    - Use of third-party site professionals to oversee the cleanup process
      - A number of states have successful cleanup programs using this concept
    - Enrollment of RCRA facilities in streamlined State Response Programs
      - Many states have voluntary cleanup programs designed to efficiently oversee the cleanup of sites
    - Development of an "oversight light" model that outlines a few



key check-in points where discussion of cleanup decisions may be important

- And, of course, enforcement
  - EPA won't hesitate to use its enforcement tools if the cleanup goals aren't met
  - At the same time, the Agency is identifying new ways of using traditional enforcement tools, and you'll be hearing more about that from EPA's enforcement office during this conference
- The 2020 Corrective Action Challenge has set an extremely aggressive goal
  - Your success in achieving this goal will depend on your ability to move further beyond past reliance on command-and-control than ever before, while still retaining appropriate levels of accountability
  - While at this conference you'll be divided up into breakout groups to brainstorm ideas on how to achieve the vision I've talked about today
  - Several regions and many states, as well private companies, have implemented successful "facility-lead" approaches, where facility owners assume responsibility for meeting clear environmental goals outside of a regulatory context
    - They are here to share their experiences with the rest of us
  - And in many states, non-RCRA state cleanup authorities are being used to oversee cleanups at RCRA facilities
    - These facilities include "high-priority" sites, as well as low- and medium-priority sites
    - States and EPA regions have worked out various approaches to

addressing cleanups under non-RCRA authorities, and it's clean  
that no one solution fits all

- So I wish you the best of luck as you investigate these different ideas and then implement the ones that work best at each facility
  - You have a tough job ahead
  - But having seen you in action over the past few years, having worked side-by-side with many of you, I know you can do it
  - In 2020, when I join with the rest of America in celebrating the nationwide success of RCRA corrective action, I will remember all of you with great admiration and gratitude
  - You have 2020 vision
  - You can see the future clearly
  - I can think of no group better qualified to achieve the RCRA corrective action vision than the people here today
  - I am confident you will succeed
  - Thank you for everything